

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: An Analysis of Joan Tower's Solo Keyboard Works

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The purpose of this paper was to analyze and discuss Joan Tower's solo keyboard compositions through 2007. This includes five piano pieces—*Circles*, *Fantasia*, *Red Garnet Waltz*, *No Longer Very Clear*, *Big Steps*—and an organ piece, *Ascent*. Tower's compositional style can be divided into two periods. In the first period, where serial music predominates, I discussed twelve-tone row forms and contemporary keyboard techniques as found in two works, *Circles* and *Fantasia*. In her second period, I discussed these characteristics: one movement structures, her organic approach to composition, and her use of motivic development. Further, I included a discussion of form, scales, harmony, rhythm, and some performance issues.